



**NEIGHBORHOOD  
COMMERCIAL  
REVITALIZATION  
PROGRAM**

**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION DEPARTMENT**

**NEWSLETTER VOLUME 10 ISSUE 4 WINTER 2004**

## NCR Gala a Huge Success, to Become Annual Event

Generously sponsored by Citibank the Inaugural Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization (NCR) HACER Gala was held at the Witte Museum on Wednesday, November 10, 2004. Members of the NCR program were recognized for their efforts in improving their inner-city corridors for fiscal years

2003 and 2004. Through clean-up, marketing, promotions, façade and structural improvements, each district successfully brought economic reinvestment

back to their area by attracting new consumers, investors and job opportunities. The Southtown district walked away with the coveted Mayor's Award at the event for achieving Overall Success in neighborhood improvement, revitalization and reinvestment efforts. They consistently met all annual goals in the categories of net new jobs, net new businesses, private investment, annual events, and façade improvements. This district is located south of downtown and is a Mainstreet Program recognized by the State of Texas.

"All of these districts have undergone remarkable revitalization," said San Antonio Mayor Ed Garza. "An investment made in our neighborhoods is an investment in the city and ultimately our way of life. The success of these neighborhoods has exceeded all expectations and will serve as a benchmark for what can be accomplished when we come together with one goal to drive us."

In addition to Southtown, other districts took home first and second place honors in various categories. The first place winners were designated as *Pioneers* (those who forge paths for others to follow), while second place awardees were named *Pacesetters* (those who distinguish themselves as leaders and have also made great strides through the years). (See sidebar page 2 for all winners.)

The NCR program to date has seen over \$60 million in private investment, 137 new businesses, and over 2,400 new jobs in these target areas through FY 03-04. (See page 2 for the FY 03-04 achievements.)

The Neighborhood Action Department works with private sector partners like Citibank to help achieve the goals and mission of the Department.

Continued on page two

The Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization Program's  
**HACER GALA**  
Honor. Award. Celebrate. Evolve. Renew.  
2004



Citibank's John Dansler and Lynn Belk, greet keynote speaker Arabella Martinez, Interim City Manager Rolando Bono, Councilmen Perez, Segovia, and Barrera.

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“Citibank is excited to partner with the City and help make a difference in the community,” said Lynn Belk, director of Communications and Community Relations for Citibank Service Center.

“We look forward to continuing our relationship and commitment with the City.” The Neighborhood Action Department is grateful for this Citibank’s generous contribution and continued support.

**★Accelerated Growth** (Most Net New Businesses and Most Net New Jobs Created)

*Pioneer Award:* Austin Highway, 26 net new businesses and 1,129 net new jobs created

*Pacesetters:* Deco District, 10 net new businesses and 233 net new jobs created

**★Communication Excellence**

(Best Marketing and Communications Efforts)

*Pioneer Award:* Presa Real, 42 community events, business owner meetings, newsletters and NCR networking meetings

*Pacesetters:* New Light Village, 36 community events, business owner meetings, newsletters and NCR networking meetings

**★Energized Initiative**

(Highest Private Investment Leveraged)

*Pioneer Award:* Austin Highway, \$28,144,509 of private investment

*Pacesetters:* Deco District, \$16,806,500 of private investment

**★Reclaimed Pride** (Most Operation Facelift Grants Awarded)

*Pioneer Award:* Southtown, 7 completed Operation Facelift Grant projects that resulted in \$65,336 of public investment that leveraged \$371,979 in private investment

*Pacesetters:* Austin Highway, 3 completed Operation Facelift Grant projects that resulted in \$31,980 of public investment that leveraged \$154,960 in private investment

**★Mayor’s Best NCR Overall Award**

**Southtown**, with the creation of 163 net new jobs, 32 net new businesses, and \$3,443,150 of private investment.



Southtown’s Board President Adrian Gonzalez accepts Mayor’s Award, also pictured Assistant City Manager Jelynn Burley, Councilwoman Patti Radle, and Citibank’s Lynn Belk.

## NCR BY THE NUMBERS

FY 03-04 Achievements

Net New Jobs—1369

Net New Businesses— 44

New Private Investment—\$14,452,989

## Green Book Drive

Story by: Anna Sanchez, Presa Real Intern, Providence High School Senior

Green Elementary located in Presa Real is having a big book drive! Green Elementary, one of San Antonio’s oldest and finest schools, has a new library and with that has a great need for new books to fill it. Robert B. Green Elementary has been around since 1912 and is one the neighborhood’s oldest institutions. Principal David Espiritu, the Staff and students are very excited about their new library, several new classrooms and offices.

The library is very big and complete with a reading nook for students to read or be read to. With this the library has a shortage of reading materials and is limited in reference supplies for children with big research projects. There are many work stations located in the library for after school work and a big enough work space for lengthy projects. The library is a perfect place for the children to go to as a quiet spot where they enjoy time spent reading a good book. Your donations for books would be greatly appreciated by all the children of Green. Book drive partners are accepting new books or donations to buy the specific books needed. If you would like to contribute to the cause, there is a list of books Principal Espiritu has put together. Please contact Presa Real (534-5533) or Green Elementary with your donation. Let’s show these children where books can take their imagination and future!

## Modern Meat Locker Building - Now Open

The first multi-tenant commercial building located in Midtown on Blanco is now back in service to the neighborhood after sitting mostly vacant for the last 20 years. Constructed in 1926, the old Modern Meat Locker Building (1800-1812 Blanco Road) held tenants such as Piggly Wiggly, Prassel's Drug Store, St. Louis Bakery, King Bakery, Monte Vista Cleaners, Community Barber Shop and Sunshine Shoe Repair. The newly renovated building is the new office for building owners and lawyers Trey Martin and Curt Cukjati. In addition to the law firm, four office or retail tenant spaces are also available. "I hope more people will investigate the process, we found it to be a pleasant, gratifying experience from start to finish," comments Curt Cukjati.

Trey and Curt are to be commended for their commitment to work with the Midtown on Blanco organization as well as the City of San Antonio to preserve this historic building in the core of Midtown and rehabilitate it into a high quality, attractive property that will benefit and serve the entire area. In addition to receiving Operation Facelift grant monies, the property also benefits from historic tax credits for local landmark properties. To learn more about these programs, you may contact the Operation Facelift Coordinator at 207-3971 or the City's Historic Preservation Office at 207-7925.



## VIA unveils Smart Commute Program

**If you are thinking about buying a home, you could qualify for more benefits and receive free bus rides for a year depending on your location.**

By purchasing a home that is within ¼ mile of selected VIA bus stops (Smart Commute Zone) and using VIA buses, you could qualify for a larger loan amount when obtaining a mortgage offered by San Antonio Federal Credit Union (SACU) through the San Antonio Smart Commute Initiative. The Smart Commute routes overlap several NCR districts, so this program directly benefits NCR neighborhoods and surrounding property owners.

In 2004, VIA joined forces with San Antonio Federal Credit Union (SACU) and Fannie Mae to launch the Smart Commute initiative in San Antonio. This initiative gives potential home buyers who live within one-quarter of a mile of select VIA bus stops the opportunity to qualify for a mortgage that recognizes the potential cost savings available to users of public transportation. The initiative also allows qualified buyers to convert that savings into additional borrowing power of a home mortgage.

The Smart Commute initiative allows the lender, SACU, to add \$200-2,250 to the monthly qualifying income of a household. The initiative also offers low down payments for borrowers in all income groups. Smart Commute benefits are also offered to those who are refinancing a home.

As an extra incentive to help you become familiar with the public transportation system in San Antonio, home buyers under the Smart Commute Initiative will receive FREE commutes on VIA for ONE YEAR, plus personalized trip planning assistance.

To view the Smart Commute Zone on the Interactive System Map, visit [www.sacu.com](http://www.sacu.com).



## NHI Grants Support NCR Community-Based Arts Projects

As part of a special partnership with the Office of Cultural Affairs, 6 NCR districts have been awarded Neighborhood Heritage Initiative funding to increase public art in their commercial corridors. Several artistic events have already seen success and many are yet to come. With awards ranging from \$7,500-24,000, NCR non-profits partnered with local artists to celebrate Kwanzaa (EastTown @ Commerce), kick off the holidays with a Holiday Laser Spectacular (Presa Real) and increase visibility for the MLK Holiday (New Braunfels). Projects to come include "Art Stops" on the Awesome Austin Highway and in Presa Real, Deco Days Art Fest, Southtown Artscape, Birds in Flight and Tales from the Cemetery.

### Operation Facelift Update

There are currently SEVEN Operation Facelift Projects under construction, FOUR awaiting contracts and THREE applications being processed.

Funding is still available and Abigail is always accepting applications. For more info call 207-3971.



### RESTAURANT OWNERS MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

What does your restaurant say to your customers? Do you wish more people knew about you? Do you know your actual food and/or bar costs? Are those costs as low as they could be? How do you succeed against tough competition?

To help you answer these and other questions, the NCR Program is pleased to offer a training session entitled, **"The Forks and Knives of Restaurant Success."** The specialized, all-day training session will cover financial planning, food and bar costs, marketing, renovation ideas, and strategies to outperform the competition. Attendees will enjoy a fun day and walk away with real-world applications of concepts presented. Consultants from Austin-based Counihan & Associates will conduct the training. Established in 1984, the firm specializes in serving the Hospitality and Food Service Industry.

By partnering with St. Phillip's Culinary Arts Institute, the seminar will be offered at the college where students will prepare a full-course meal for participants. NCR will cover the bulk of the seminar costs, and **restaurant business owners are strongly encouraged to attend.** Although details are currently being finalized, the date for the seminar will be Tuesday, March 1st. Interested parties should contact Veronica Cervera at 207-3944 or [vcervera@sanantonio.gov](mailto:vcervera@sanantonio.gov) for more information.

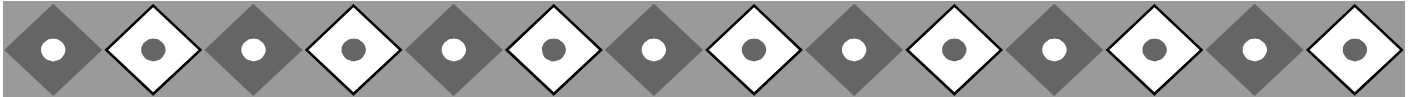


# TIRZ Project Funds Available

The City of San Antonio is seeking proposals for development projects located within the Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) #11 known as the Inner City TIRZ. The Inner City TIRZ and its Board of Directors were created by the City Council in 2000 to support development, redevelopment, revitalization and public infrastructure improvements within a 2.6-square mile area adjacent to downtown San Antonio. This Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks catalyst projects that will 1) generate TIRZ Fund revenue, 2) implement the goals of previous planning studies which incorporate parcels from the Inner City TIRZ, and 3) meet the special development use patterns in compliance with the current 2004 TIF Guidelines adopted by the City Council in January 2004.

Successful projects will demonstrate an understanding of the unique leverage provided by Tax Increment Financing (TIF). The TIF tool is designed to reward projects that create substantial value in a relatively short period of time. In San Antonio, TIF is often used as a committed source of revenue for payment of a construction and/or permanent loan obtained from a private lending institution for a specific project.

The due date for the proposals is Monday, January 24, 2005. See also <http://www.sanantonio.gov/rfp>



## Construction Work Begins on Deco District Streetscape Enhancement Project

Funded by \$400,000 in bond funds approved by voters in the 1999 and 2003 bond election, streetscape improvements featuring seventeen 21-foot palm trees with complimentary lighting and sidewalk enhancements are currently being installed at various spots along Fredericksburg Road between West Kings Highway and Rosewood. In addition to the obvious advantages of beauty and a unified community look, trees and landscaping enhancements also serve to calm traffic, reduce littering, increase property values, and attract pedestrian traffic.

The work, managed by the Jefferson Woodlawn Lake Community Development Corporation (CDC) and designed by Burton Rose Gonzales and C F Zavala Group, is being accomplished by a local contractor, Charlie & Company, with the trees supplied by Maldonado Nursery. The Jefferson Woodlawn Lake CDC serves as the lead agency for renewal efforts in the Deco District that focus on attracting consumers, private sector investment and employment opportunities. Approximately 150 businesses participate in the revitalization efforts of the Deco District. Since its inception, the District has generated over \$23 million in private investment throughout this 1.5-mile section of Fredericksburg Road.

The streetscape enhancement project is being coordinated by the CDC in conjunction with the extensive renovation of a building that will house the CDC office, a community meeting room and arts and cultural organizations. Streetscape enhancements will include the placement of palm trees, landscaping, planters, ornamental pavers, lighting, art deco signage and other streetscape features. The work will be completed in the coming months and will be followed by enhancements on an additional five blocks of Fredericksburg Road between Rosewood and Queen-





## Welcome New NCR Staff

**Veronica Cervera** and **Bobbye Hamilton** have recently joined our NCR Program staff as Senior Economic Development Specialists. Veronica is a native of San Antonio, TX and holds a Bachelor's degree from Trinity University in Economics and Business Administration. Prior to joining the Neighborhood Action Department, she worked as a business consultant for a small firm in San Antonio where she helped clients visualize and achieve their next level of success. Her clients were spread over a myriad of industries, including sales, residential construction, graphic design, real estate, and web hosting, among others. Veronica's experience in working with people and helping organizations realize their goals will prove to be an asset to our project areas. She is excited about joining our organization and will work hard to enhance and strengthen San Antonio's neighborhood commercial districts. Prior to joining the Neighborhood Action Department, Bobbye worked with the City of Glendale, Arizona as Sr. Management Analyst for the Administrative Services Group and Marketing Director of the newly created Conventions, Events & Cultural Services Department. A native of Las Vegas, Bobbye holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Science from Grambling State University, and a Master's Degree in Business Management from Troy State University. In addition, she completed the Arizona State University Institute for Public Executive program and the Glendale Executive Leadership Academy.

We are excited to have them join our team and know that they will bring a wealth of expertise to the Program. Please introduce yourself and make them feel welcome.

### NCR CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- ★ **JANUARY 17—MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY**
- ★ **JANUARY 24-28—NDC TRAINING—ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE**
- ★ **FEBRUARY—BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

- ★ **FEBRUARY 21—PRESIDENT'S DAY**
- ★ **FEBRUARY 27—RASCO PARTY—SOUTHTOWN**
- ★ **MARCH 1 - RESTAURANT TRAINING**
- ★ **MARCH 28- APRIL 1—NDC TRAINING—BUSINESS CREDIT ANALYSIS**
- ★ **MARCH 28—EASTER**